

**11/12 DECEMBER 2025 BOARD MEETING
CONTESTED AGENDA ITEM**

AGENDA ITEM: 11

SUBJECT:
CITY OF MODESTO

BOARD ACTION:

Consideration of Revised WDRs for the City of Modesto Regional Water Recycling Facility – Sutter Campus/ Regional Water Recycling Facility – Jennings Plant

BACKGROUND:

The City of Modesto (Discharger) owns and operates a wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system, and provides sewerage service to the City of Modesto, the Empire Sanitary District, and a portion of the City of Ceres. The Facility serves a population of over 224,000 people along with local industries including food processing industries, e.g., canneries.

The Facility is regulated under four separate WDRs. The discharge of tertiary treated wastewater to surface waters of the San Joaquin River and Delta-Mendota Canal is regulated under two different National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits (Nos. CAG585001 and CA0085316). Land applied biosolids are regulated by WDRs Order 94-030, adopted on 28 January 1994. Discharges of secondary undisinfect recycled wastewater to land for use as irrigation is regulated by WDRs Order 99-112, adopted on 28 July 1999. **WDRs R5-2025-XXXX** replaces and rescinds Orders 94-030 (biosolids) and 99-112 (wastewater to land).

The Facility is made up of three treatment facilities: Sutter Campus, Jennings Campus, and the Modesto Ranch. The Sutter Campus receives and screens the influent of domestic and industrial wastewater, followed by sedimentation. Biosolids are removed in the sedimentation process and are treated to Class B standards in anaerobic digesters and then dried on-site at the Sutter Campus for eventual land application. Primary effluent from the Sutter Campus is discharged to the Jennings Campus. The Jennings Campus treatment includes two different treatment trains. One train treats the wastewater to tertiary recycled water standards that discharges to surface waters. The second treatment train treats the wastewater to secondary undisinfect standards, and is stored in over 1,000 acres of wastewater ponds for use as irrigation at the Modesto Ranch. Biosolids are further treated in digestion pits. Modesto Ranch consists of approximately 2,458 acres of LAAs and receives secondary undisinfect recycled water to irrigate fodder crops. The LAAs also receive process water from several canneries and dried biosolids from the Sutter Campus and Jennings Campus for use as a soil amendment.

ISSUES:

Concentrations of constituents in groundwater at the Jennings Campus exceed Water Quality Objectives. In addition, sludge is discharged to unlined drying beds at the Sutter Campus and it is unclear if impacts to groundwater have occurred.

RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed Tentative WDRs requires the Discharger to conduct several evaluations to determine the cause of groundwater impacts, to identify actions that could be taken to mitigate those impacts, and to determine if there are impacts to beneficial uses downgradient and off-site of the Facility. The Facility is also required to cease all discharges to the unlined sludge drying beds by 2036 as new, lined beds are proposed to be constructed at the Jennings Campus.

REVIEWS:

Management Review:	
Legal Review:	

BOARD MEETING LOCATION:

State Water Resources Control Board
Klamath Room – Second Floor
Joe Serna Jr. - CalEPA Building
1001 I Street, Sacramento

And via Video and Teleconference
(<https://video.calepa.ca.gov/#?player/3344>)

☒ **AND VIA VIDEO AND TELECONFERENCE**